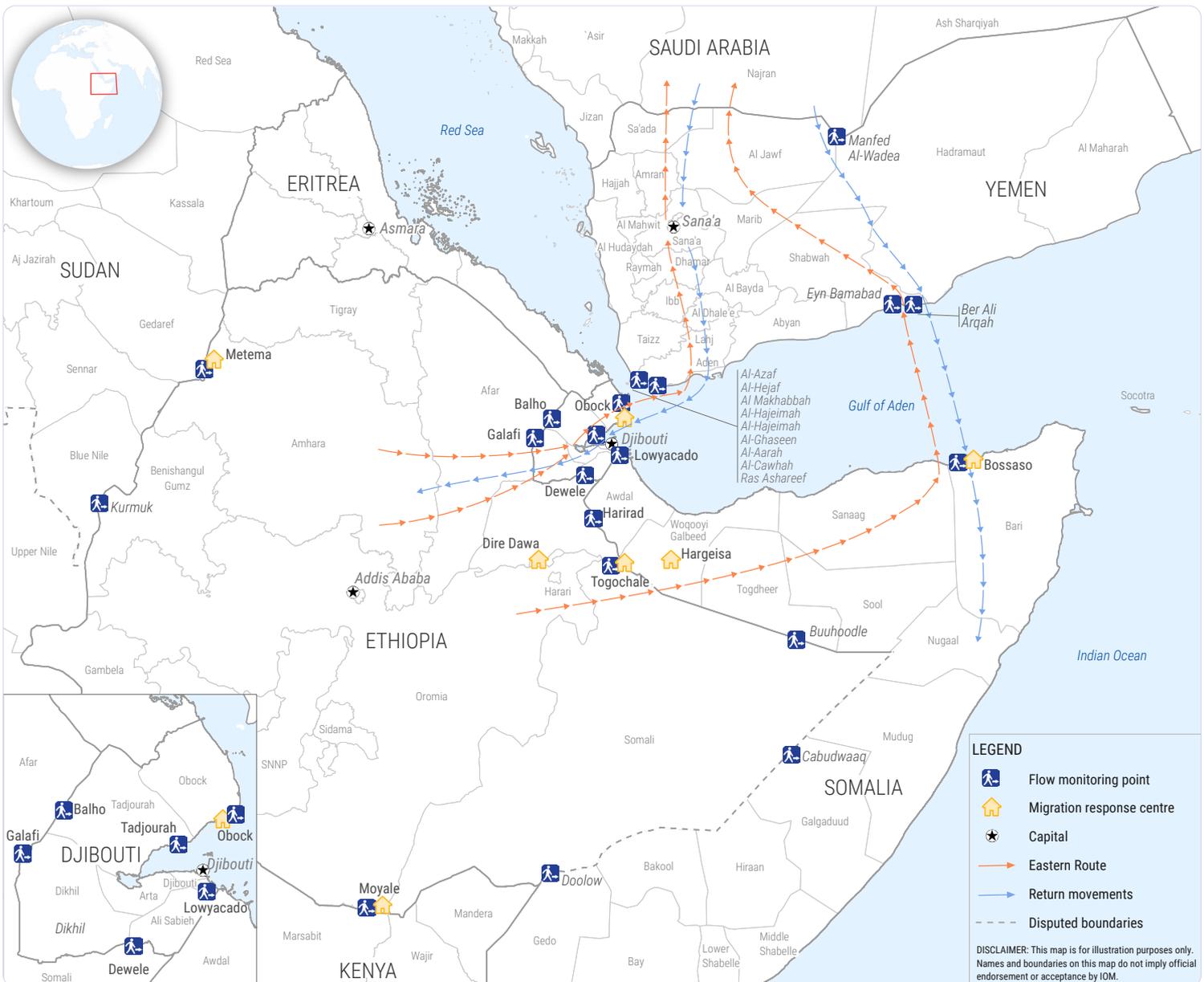


About the report

The Horn of Africa and Yemen is one of the busiest and riskiest migration corridors in the world travelled by hundreds of thousands of migrants, the majority of whom travel in an irregular manner, often relying on smugglers to facilitate movement along the Eastern Corridor. This regional report provides monthly updates on the complex migratory dynamics through [Ethiopia](#), [Djibouti](#), [Somalia](#) and [Yemen](#) based on diverse data sources and consultations with key informants in the four countries. Moreover, it provides information on the main protection concerns for migrants along the journey, [a focus on children](#) and information on the [forced returns from Saudi Arabia](#) to Ethiopia, Somalia and Yemen.

Key findings:

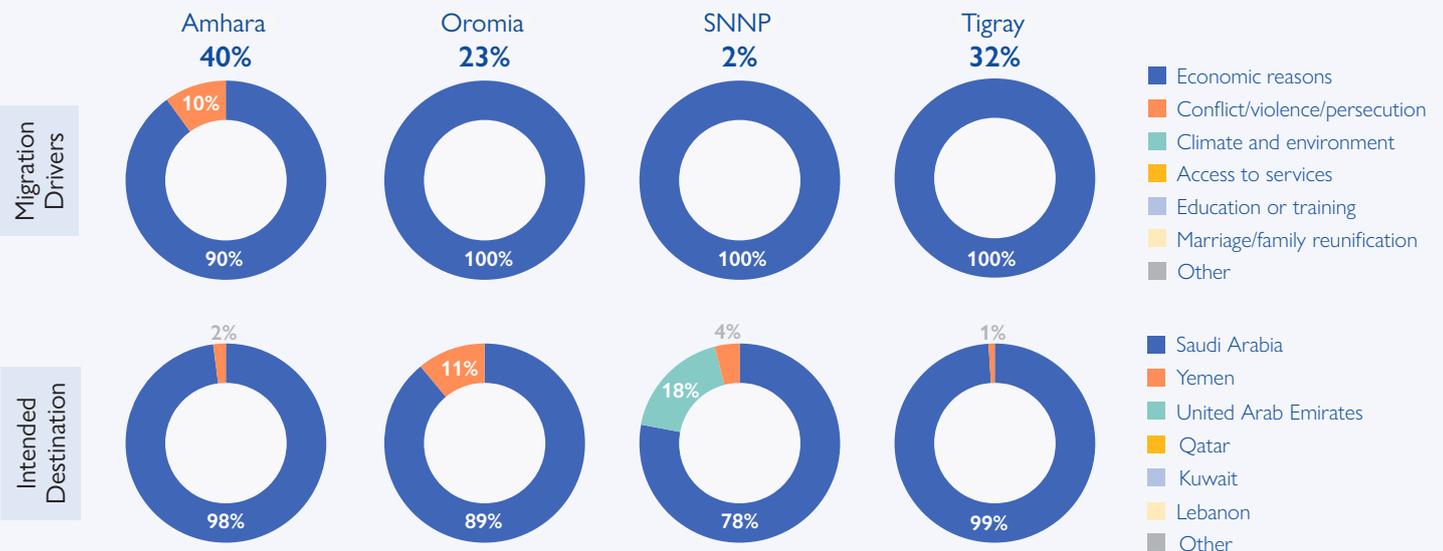
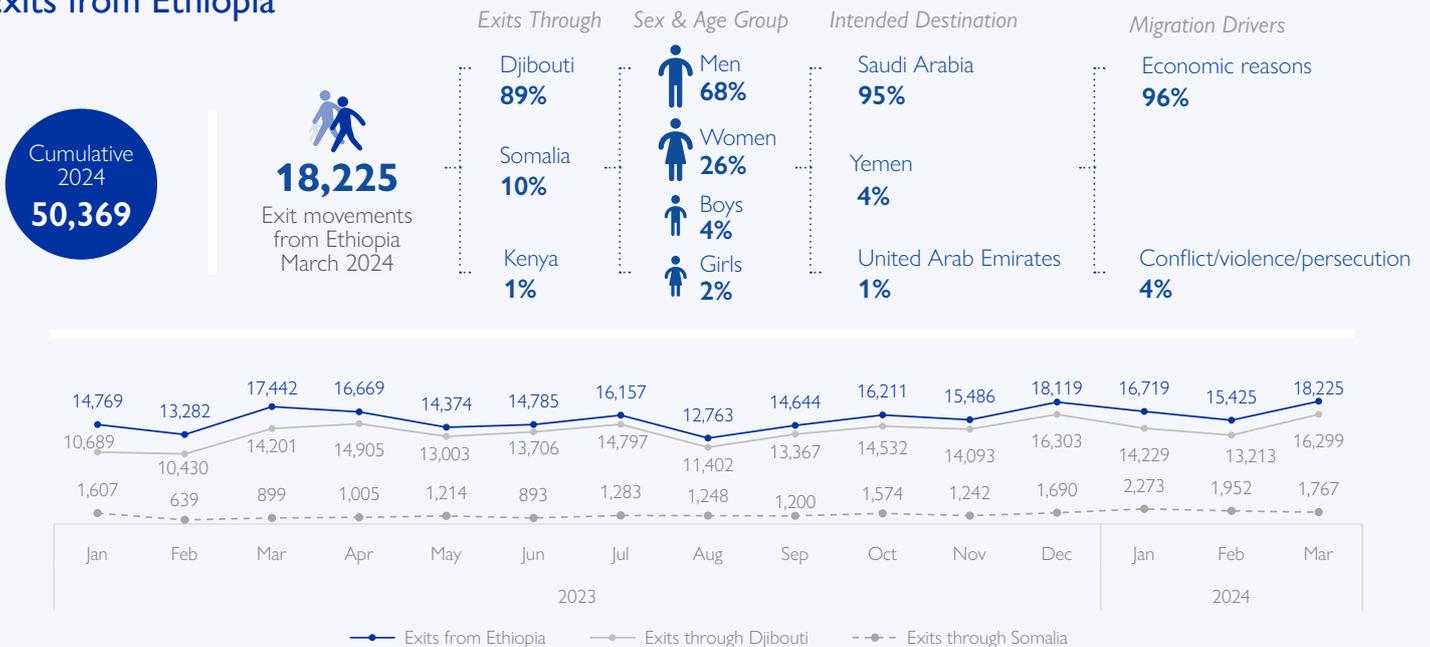
- Overall exit movements from Ethiopia increased by 18% in the last month, marking the highest number of movements tracked since 2018, and an increase of 1% compared with the previous highest figure reported in December 2023 (18,119).
- The number of movements leaving Ethiopia due to conflict, violence or persecution multiplied more than eightfold between February (84) and March (731), which may be attributed to clashes between the Fano militia and government forces. In fact, all movements tracked due to conflict, violence or persecution departed the Amhara region, from where one in ten was looking for safety.
- Returns to Obock and Tadjourah decreased by 32% in the last month. This may be linked with the period of Ramadan, where the number of patrolling authorities in Yemen decreases and crackdowns on movements toward Saudi Arabia generally ease.
- The number of women (+9%) and children (+72%) tracked in Bossaso increased by more than a quarter (+27%). This increase was acute in girls, which more than doubled (+166%, from 121 to 322), while the number of boys increased by 44% (from 397 to 570).
- More than 400 migrants (385 Ethiopian, 25 Yemeni, and 1 Somali) were deported from Oman to Yemen, while in Ta'iz Governorate, a truck heading towards the north of the country that was smuggling 109 Ethiopian migrants was intercepted at a security checkpoint.



Migration Through Ethiopia

- Overall exit movements from Ethiopia increased by 18% in the last month, marking the highest number of movements tracked since 2018, and an increase of 1% compared with the previous highest figure reported in December 2023. The increase has been particularly pronounced in exits through Djibouti (+23%), while exits through Somalia (-9%) and Kenya (-23%) decreased.
- In the first quarter of 2024 (50,400) exits from Ethiopia increased by 11% when compared with the first quarter of 2023 (45,500).
- Even though the share of women and children remained similar between February (30%) and March (32%), the number of children increased by 40% (from 816 to 1,139) and the number of women by 26% (from 3,766 to 4,734).
- The number of children travelling alone decreased by 21% between February (574) and March (451) and the share of unaccompanied children decreased from 70% to 40% in the past month. However, the number of child heads of household more than tripled, from 114 to 380, and represented 33% of all children in March (14% in February).
- Linked to the overall increase in exit movements, those departing from Tigray increased by 56% between February (3,687) and March (5,756), and while in February they represented 24% of all movements, this increased to 32% in March. Those departing from Amhara (+10%), Afar (+9%) and Oromia (+5%) observed a more moderate increase.
- The number of movements due to conflict, violence or persecution multiplied more than eightfold between February (84) and March (731), which may be attributed to clashes between the Fano militia and government forces. In fact, all movements tracked due to conflict, violence or persecution departed the Amhara region, from where one in ten was looking for safety.
- On the other hand, the overall number of return movements to Ethiopia decreased by 14%, and the number of movements willing to return to Amhara decreased by 51% (from 84 to 41).
- An elderly returning migrant passed away due to health complications in March in Metema.
- Although registrations at MRCs decreased in Dire Dawa (-53%), Metema (-28%) and Togochale (-35%) from the previous month, registrations quadrupled (+282%) in Moyale after previously detained migrants sought assistance at the centre.
- At the MRCs in Moyale and Togochale, detention was the most-reported hardship, respectively reported by 99% and 90% of people. In Metema and Togochale, 96% and 47% of people seeking assistance respectively reported physical or psychological abuse.
- An overwhelming number of children were unaccompanied in Moyale and Togochale MRCs (71% and 81% of children, respectively), while no unaccompanied children were registered at the other MRCs in March.

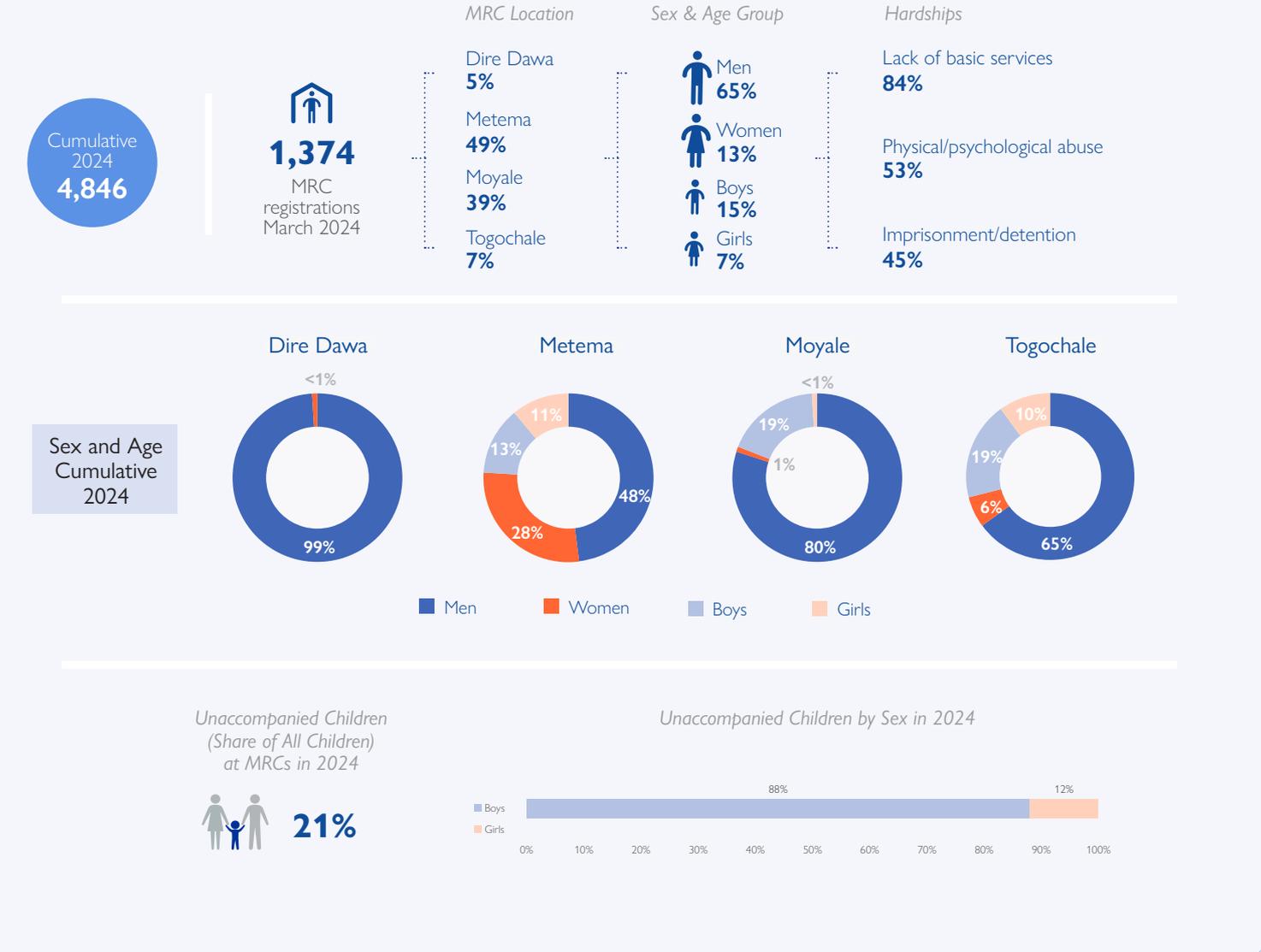
Exits from Ethiopia



Return Movements to Ethiopia



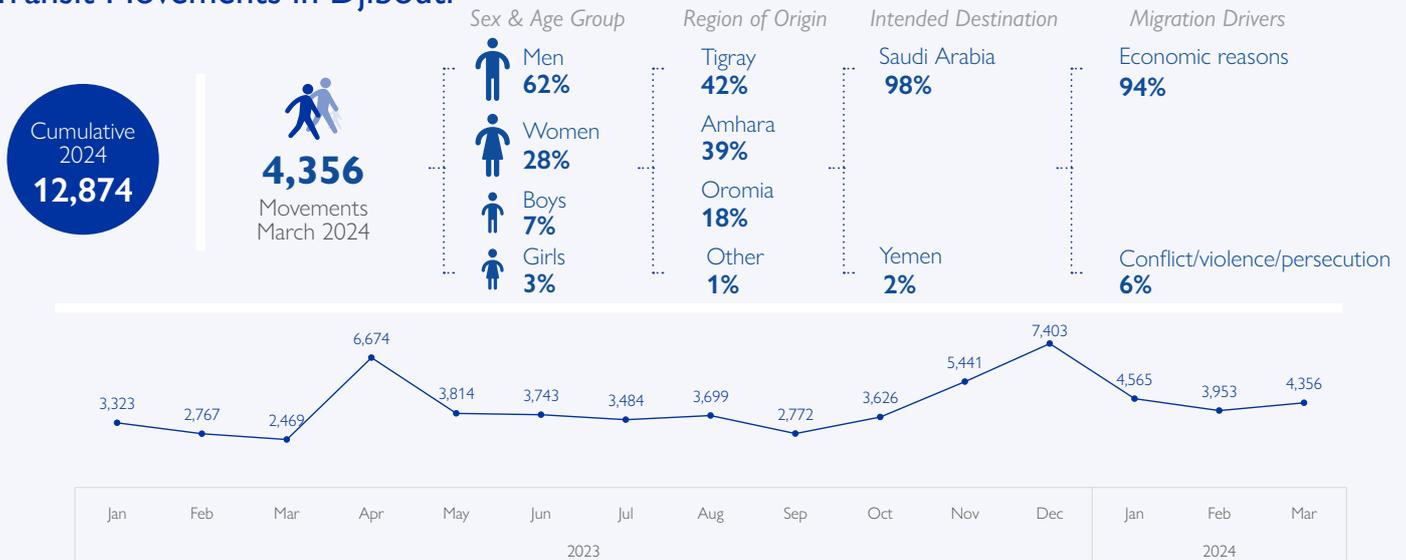
Migrants Seeking Assistance



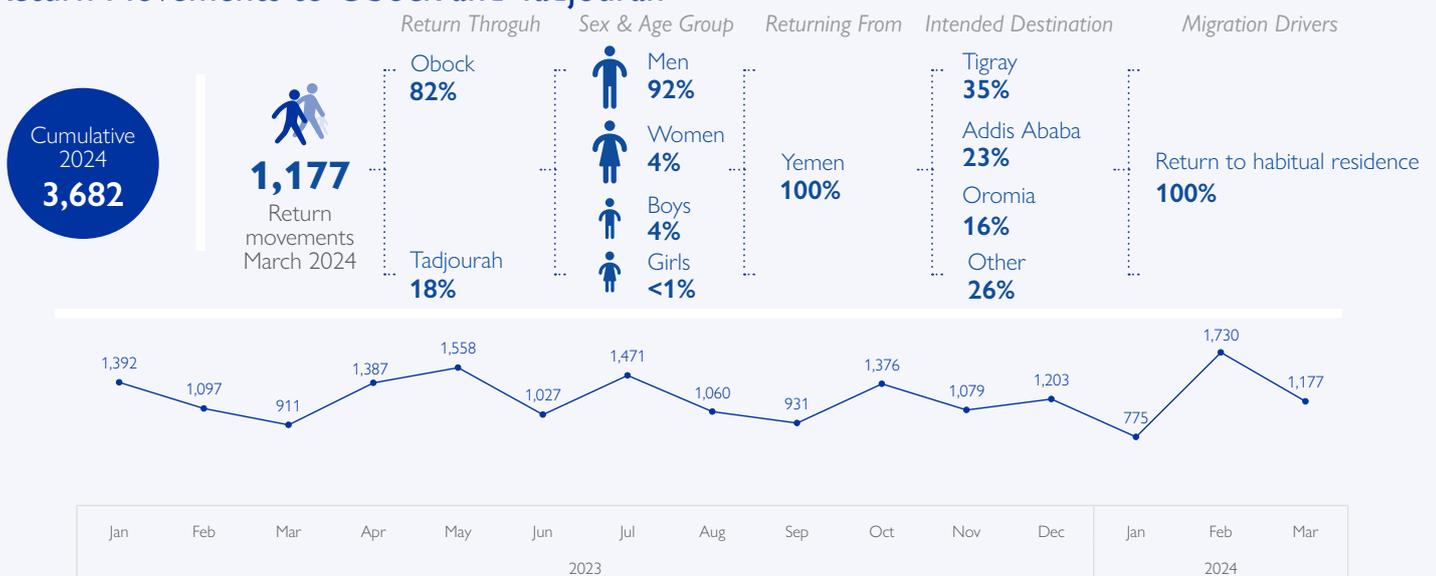
Migration Through Djibouti

- After two consecutive months of a decrease in movements tracked in Obock towards the Arabian Peninsula, March observed a 10% increase. This may be linked to Ramadan, generally considered to be an ideal time for migrants wishing to go to countries in the Arabian Peninsula.
- This increase was particularly pronounced for those departing from Tigray (+34%), who represented 42% of movements in March (34% in February). Movements from Amhara also increased by 11%, while those departing from Oromia (-15%) and Afar (-70%) decreased.
- While in February transit movements in Obock due to conflict, violence or persecution represented 3% of the overall movements heading towards the Arabian Peninsula, in March they represented 6% of the movements.
- More than one in ten (15%) of those who originally departed from Amhara did so due to conflict, violence, or persecution. These movements almost doubled in the last month (+91%, from 131 to 250). All of them departed Amhara, presumably due to the worsening security situation.
- Contrarily, returns to Obock and Tadjourah decreased by 32% in the last month. This may also be linked with the period of Ramadan, where the number of patrolling authorities in Yemen reportedly decreases and crackdowns on movements toward Saudi Arabia generally ease.
- Despite the overall decrease in return movements, those planning to return to Tigray almost doubled (+79%, from 230 to 411), and while in February they represented around one in ten of the returns (13%), in March they were more than one third (35%). All planning returns to other regions in Ethiopia decreased.
- In March there were 4 return movements tracked from Yemen to Djibouti through Somalia, totalling to 20 so far in 2024, all of which were tracked at the Lowyacado FMP at the border between Djibouti and Somalia.
- Stranded migrants decreased by 11% between February (710) and March (631). The decrease was particularly significant in men (-33%), while the number of women and children increased (+7%), who represented 55% of the stranded migrants in February but 66% in March.

Transit Movements in Djibouti



Return Movements to Obock and Tadjourah



Migrants Seeking Assistance



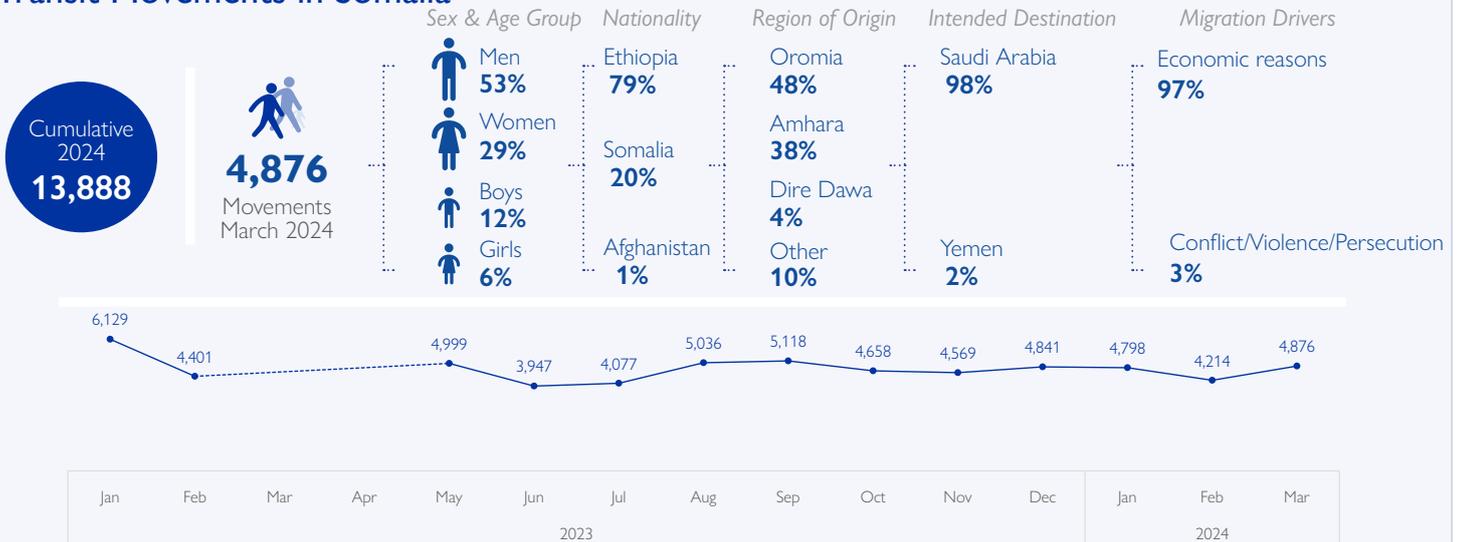
631 Stranded migrants March 2024

None reported Dead/missing migrants March 2024

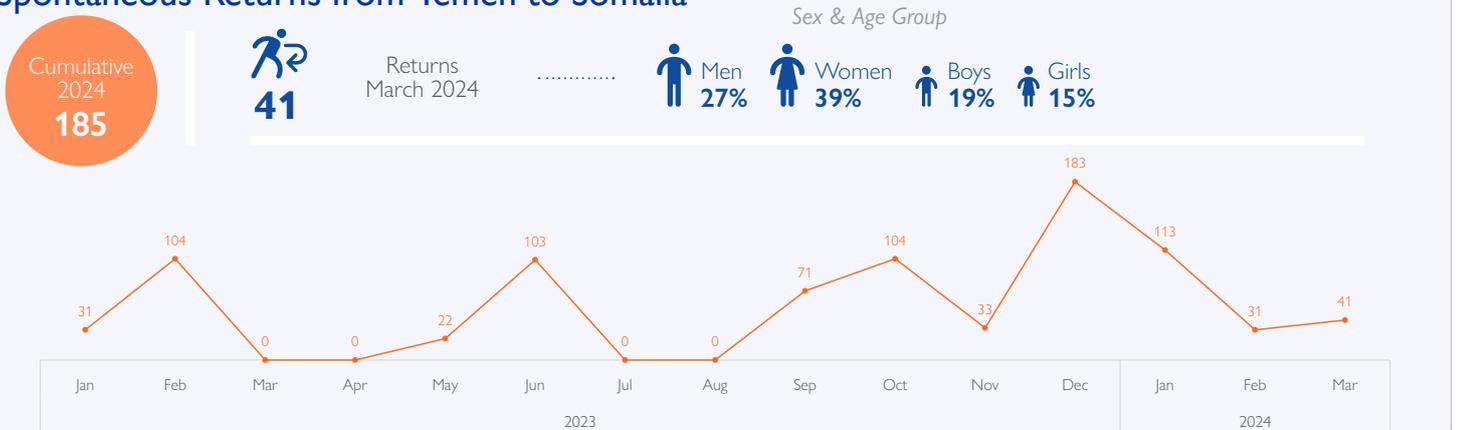
Migration Through Somalia

- Movements tracked in Bossaso observed a small increase (+16%) between February and March. Such increase was particularly marked for those originally departing from Afar (+49%, from 108 to 161) and Amhara (+44%, from 1,292 to 1,855). In fact, while those originally departing from Amhara represented 31% of movements in February, this increased to 38% in March.
- Migrants reportedly departing from Amhara due to conflict more than doubled (+152%) between February (52) and March (131).
- The number of women (+9%) and children (+72%) increased by more than a quarter (+27%). This increase was acute in girls, which more than doubled (+166%, from 121 to 322), while the number of boys increased by 44% (from 397 to 570). While the number of boys (9%) and girls (3%) represented around one in ten of the movements in February, this increased to almost one fifth in March (18%). Many of those children reported challenges on their journey, some of whom fell sick because of travelling long distances on rough roads through inclement weather.
- The number of migrant children travelling alone represented around two fifth (17%) of all children (31% in February).
- Exceptionally, in March there were 36 Afghan nationals tracked in Bossaso. Those migrated from the Sudan to Ethiopia in early 2006 and settled in Amhara. When the security situation worsened, they left Ethiopia to look for better business opportunities in Saudi Arabia since they could not go back to the Sudan due to the ongoing conflict.
- In March, seven return movements from Yemen to Somalia were tracked at the Lowyacado FMP, totalling to 31 so far in 2024.
- The number of stranded migrants (7,176) reduced (-18%) from February (8,800). However, stranded boys and girls increased by 46% (from 200 to 291) and 23% (from 150 to 185). Consequently, many unaccompanied children sought assisted voluntary return (AVR). However, only a small group of vulnerable children could be registered due to limited funding. Additionally, a significant number of stranded migrant women requested safe house referrals for their voluntary return. Critically, the delay in the returns due to lack of funding is causing increasing uncertainty and despair among those registered for AVR, most of whom face financial challenges due to lack of economic opportunities.
- In addition to the 352 migrants registered at the MRCs in Bossaso and Hargeisa, 806 migrants received basic assistance outside of the MRCs but could not be registered due to lack of funding and operational capacity.
- Women and children represented 70% of registrations at MRCs. Around one-third of people registered in Bossaso and two-fifths in Hargeisa were children (35% and 59%). While all children in Hargeisa were accompanied, most of them in Bossaso (87%) were travelling alone.

Transit Movements in Somalia¹



Spontaneous Returns from Yemen to Somalia



Migrants Seeking Assistance



7,176 Stranded migrants March 2024



None reported

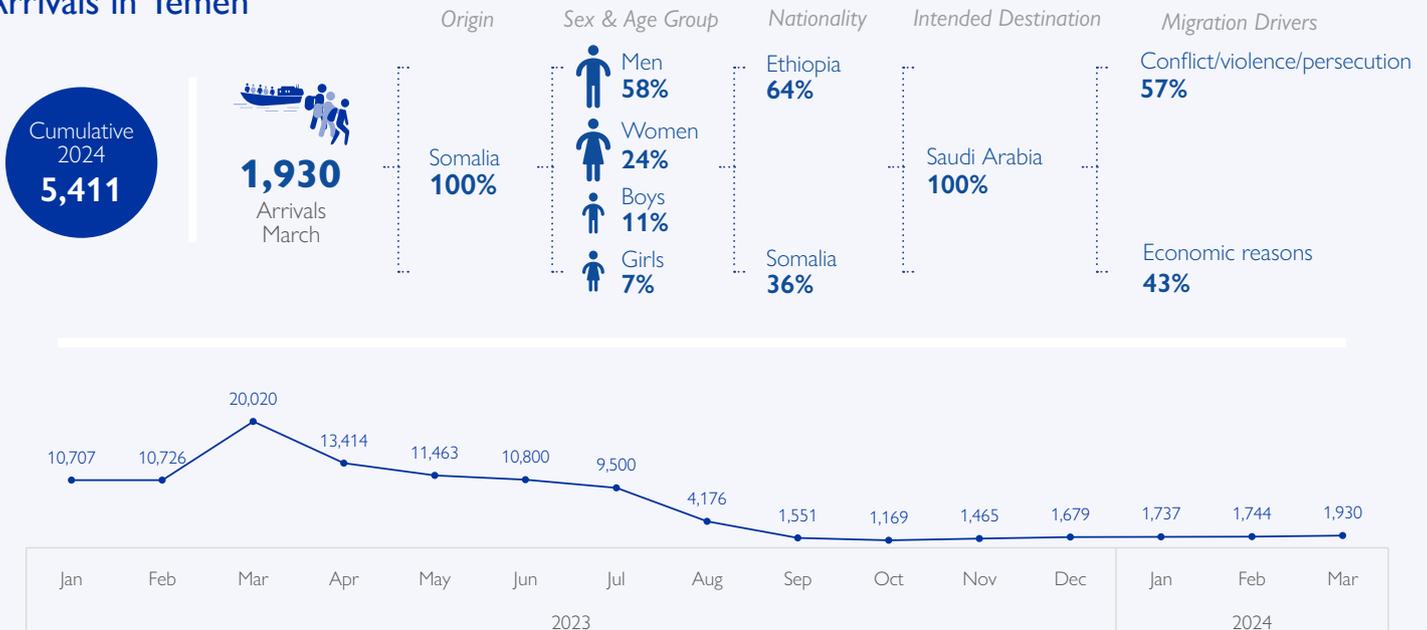
Dead/missing migrants March 2024

¹ Due to operational constraints there was a Flow Monitoring data collection suspension in March and April 2023

Migration Through Yemen

- Migrant arrivals from the Horn of Africa to Yemen slightly increased (+11%) between February and March.
- This increase was particularly marked in women (+23%, from 372 to 456) and boys (+27%, from 172 to 219).
- Due to the campaign against irregular migration in the Bab-al Mandab Strait, which has been ongoing since August 2023, there have not been migrant arrivals from Djibouti in the Lahj Governorate in the last 6 months, with a single exception in December 2023, when a boat carrying 110 migrants managed to arrive at the shores of Lahj.
- In fact, due to the campaign against irregular migration in the Lahj Governorate, overall migrant arrivals from the Horn of Africa to Yemen decreased by 87% compared to the first quarter of 2023 (41,453) and 2024 (5,411). Having a closer look to the routes, the number of movements arriving in Yemen from Djibouti decreased by 99% (from 31,409 to 210), while those arriving from Somalia decreased by half (-48% from 10,044 to 5,201).
- Conflict-induced movements increased by 12% between February (985) and March (1,102) and continue to constitute the main migration driver (57%) of migrants arriving in Yemen. Economic migration observed a 9% increase between February (759) and March (828).
- DTM teams in the field were able to track 1,174 migrants in March who either opted to take the risky journey back to their countries or were deported by boat from Yemen, which highlight the significant challenges faced by migrants in Yemen and the desperate situations that have driven them to undertake the perilous journey back to the Horn of Africa.
- Moreover, a total of 411 migrants (385 Ethiopian, 25 Yemeni, and 1 Somali) were deported from Oman to the Shahan and Hawf districts of the Al Maharah Governorate in Yemen.
- In Sana'a, around 300-350 forced movements towards the south of the country have been reported per week. Most of these migrants approach the MRC seeking information about possible VHR flights back to Ethiopia. However, of the many registered, only a few were able to travel due to limited VHR availability and funding. Furthermore, the onset of the rainy season forced migrants to stay around the MRC to seek shelter in covered areas. Despite the scarce resources available, IOM protection teams made efforts to provide these migrants with the necessary services and support in their shelters.
- In Sa'dah, the effects of the rainy season had a detrimental impact on the numerous migrants residing in improvised shelters in flood-prone areas that became flooded, causing great hardship for the migrants.
- In Ma'rib, the suspension of VHR and the continued arrival of return migrants from the Saudi Arabia border due to an increase in the number of violent incidents provoked the overcrowding of some areas where migrants seek shelter. This hampered the travel plans of migrants who either hoped to receive VHR assistance or sought to continue their journey towards Saudi Arabia. Many reported difficulties meeting their basic needs as there were limited jobs due to the end of the orange harvest season, bringing the number of stranded migrants in Ma'rib to around 1,500.
- In Ta'iz, a truck heading towards the north of the country that was smuggling 109 Ethiopian migrants was intercepted at a security checkpoint.
- Around 2,500 migrants were registered during the last VHR exercise conducted between 10 and 24 of March, while around 600 took part in VHR flights from Aden and Sa'dah.
- On 20 March, four bodies were discovered after washing ashore – two at the coast of Mokha, Taiz Governate and two at Khawkhah, Al Hudaydah Governate. The people are believed to have been aboard a vessel that sank in an invisible shipwreck in the Red Sea.

Arrivals in Yemen



Under review

Stranded migrants
March 2024



4

Dead/missing migrants
March 2024

Migrant Children Along the Eastern Corridor

Cumulative
2024
7,506

2,879
Migrant children
March 2024

Djibouti
38%
Ethiopia
19%
Somalia
31%
Yemen
12%

Boys
66%
Girls
34%

22%
Unaccompanied
14%
Heads of household

491
Migrant children seeking assistance
March 2024

In Djibouti
5%
In Ethiopia
60%
In Somalia
35%

Boys
67%
Girls
33%

58

Migrants surveyed who are caring for children (11% of all respondents)
March 2024

Left children behind in the country of origin
93%

Travelling with children
7%

Caretakers of children not travelling with the migrant parent

My spouse/partner
67%

Grandparents or extended family
31%

My older children (18 and over)
2%

Forced Returns from Saudi Arabia



2,488

Returns
March 2024

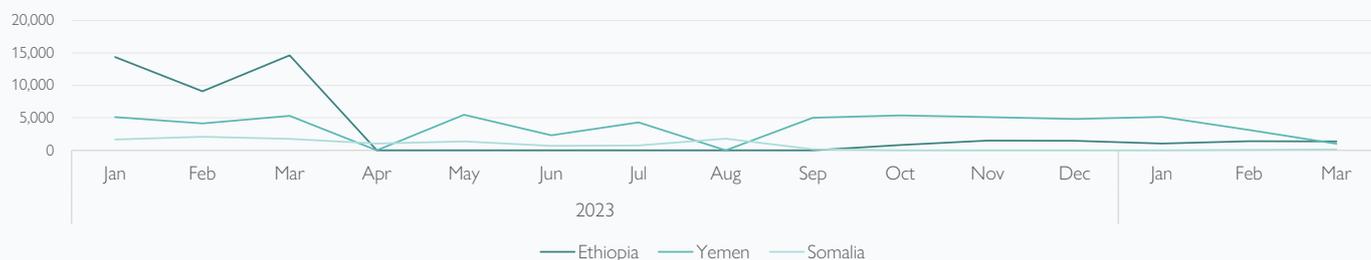
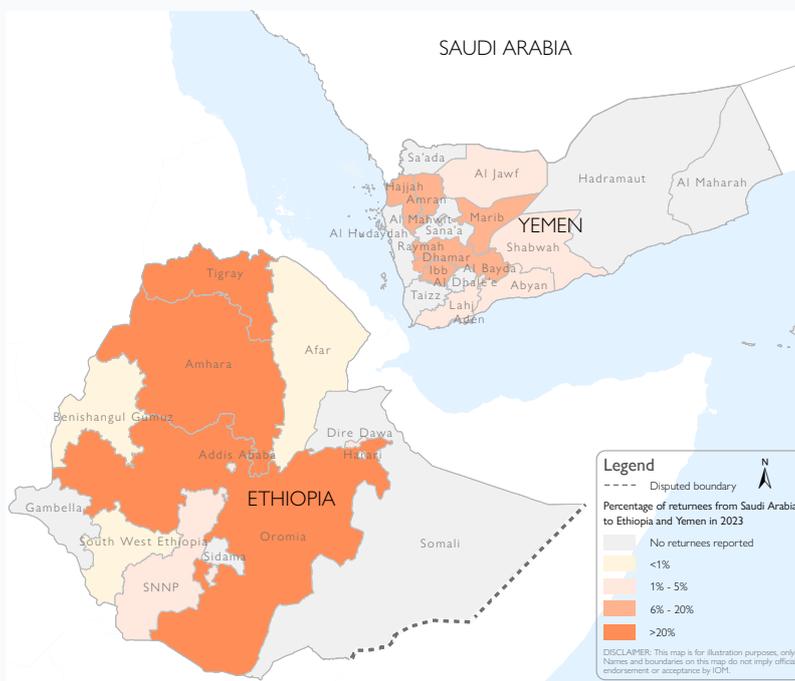
Cumulative
2024
13,202

Returns to

Ethiopia	Yemen	Somalia	Ethiopia	Yemen	Somalia
1,360	991	137	3,767	9,255	180

Region of intended return
in Ethiopia 2024

Amhara	Oromia	Tigray	SNNP	Addis Ababa
38%	31%	27%	2%	1%



Data Sources

- [Displacement Tracking Matrix \(DTM\)](#) data collected at flow monitoring points (FMPs), which includes flow monitoring registry (group level) and flow monitoring survey (individual level) data
- [Migration Response Centre \(MRC\)](#) data on migrants seeking assistance, including data on assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR)
- Voluntary humanitarian returns (VHR) from Yemen
- [Forced returns from Saudi Arabia](#)
- [Missing Migrants Project \(MMP\)](#) data on migrant deaths and disappearances

Contact